

**INDEPENDENT Phase 2a Planning Forum (Close down) for HS2**

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Phase 2a Planning Forum (Close down) for HS2</b>	
<b>Date &amp; Time:</b>	<b>Wednesday 21 February 2024, 10:30 Microsoft Teams (Virtual meeting)</b>	
<b>Chair:</b>	[REDACTED]	Independent Chair Phase 2a Planning Forum
<b>Attendee:</b>		Independent Chair Phase 2b Planning Forum
<b>HS2 Ltd Attendees:</b>	[REDACTED]	HS2 Ltd - Head of Town Planning HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Lead, Phase 2a HS2 Ltd - Head of Phase 2a Community and Stakeholder Engagement HS2 Ltd - Head of Early Works, Phase 2a HS2 Ltd - Head of Phase 2 Programme Delivery, Land & Property HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Manager HS2 Ltd - Safeguarding & Planning Manager HS2 Ltd - Senior Town Planning Manager, Phase 2b HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Assistant HS2 Ltd - Public Response Manager, Community & Stakeholder Engagement HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Administrator
<b>Local Authority Attendees:</b>	[REDACTED]	East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC) East Staffordshire Borough Council (ESBC) Lichfield District Council (LDC) Lichfield District Council (LDC) Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council (NULBC) Stafford Borough Council (SBC) Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Staffordshire County Council (SCC)
<b>Promoter Attendees:</b>	[REDACTED]	Department for Transport (DfT)
<b>Apologies:</b>	[REDACTED]	Cheshire East Council (CEC) Cheshire East Council (CEC) Department for Transport (DfT) Department for Transport (DfT) Department for Transport (DfT) Department for Transport (DfT) Department for Transport (DfT) East Staffs Borough Council (ESBC) East Staffs Borough Council (ESBC) Lichfield District Council (LDC) Newcastle-Under-Lyme Borough Council (NULBC) Shropshire County Council (SCC) Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Stafford Borough Council (SBC) Stafford Borough Council (SBC) HS2 Ltd - Senior Public Response Manager - SLA

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	[REDACTED]	HS2 Ltd - Town Planning Manager, Phase 2a HS2 Ltd - Senior Commercial Manager, Procurement & Supply Chain HS2 Ltd - Delivery Director, Phase 2a
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Item		Action Owner
1.	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chair requested all attendees who were new or who had not attended for some time to introduce themselves. [REDACTED] HS2 Ltd - Head of Phase 2 Programme Delivery, Land &amp; Property, introduced himself.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Review of previous meeting minutes and actions</b></p> <p>Draft minutes of the previous meeting (December) had been circulated so the Chair asked the Forum if any amendments were required. He noted 2.1 required <i>'administrator'</i> to read <i>'PG's team administer the safeguarding'</i> and subject to this change the minutes were agreed and should be redacted and published on gov.uk.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p>HS2 reviewed the actions log and the following were discussed;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chair thanked LB and noted his reference to that DfT mentioned safeguarding. He asked if there was an update planned when LAs will be informed about general safeguarding? LB said he will discuss with DfT's Land and Property Team for an update on when members can expect more information. (Dec, Item 2) <b>ACTION CLOSED</b> (see item 4 below)</li> <li>• PG also commented that [REDACTED] in his team coordinates the CEF &amp; BLEF schemes and will assist the process of closing the schemes. PG offer that if useful to the Forum, GW could attend a meeting and give an update on the various funds and how HS2 Ltd handles them. The Chair agreed it would be good for GW to present at the May meeting. (Dec, Item 2) <b>ACTION OPEN</b></li> <li>• Modelling of the train service specification - LB (DfT) advised there is currently no timeline whilst modelling is undertaken to establish what infrastructure is needed. (Dec, Item 2.2) <b>ACTION OPEN</b></li> <li>• The Chair suggested it would be helpful if the DfT could confirm the status of U&amp;As and some principles about it in the future. LB (DfT) agreed to return with something meaningful next time. (Dec, Item 2) <b>ACTION CLOSED</b></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">HS2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HS2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DfT</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JH (SBC) described a scenario where the LPA has granted planning permission for replacement farmhouses as HS2 are demolishing and using land at the existing ones. Permissions were granted on the condition that, as part of the works, the original farmhouse(s) would be demolished, otherwise they would be additional dwellings in the open countryside which is contrary to policy. SBC need to know if HS2 have indeed demolished buildings that they took possession of or, if not, will HS2 offer them back to the original landowners. Then there is a potential problem in that SC may have to revoke some planning permissions. JH thought it was two or three properties but will confirm via email. JH (SBC)</li> <li>PG (HS2) requested JH (SBC) email the 2a Planning Forum email address with relevant properties and specific details. He confirmed HS2 will gather data with L&amp;P colleagues and respond accordingly, acknowledging it was sensitive and complex [HS2 provided update to confirm no demolitions have taken place to date]. JH to investigate the three buildings' statuses and update Forum if he has a point of principle to discuss. (Dec, Item 3) <b>ACTION OPEN</b></li> </ul>	<b>SBC</b>
<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Department for Transport (DfT) – Update</b></p> <p>LB (DfT) stated it was a holding position, with no update to the previous meeting. DfT are working on a programme with a list of ongoing work of how to best close down the Phase 2a route. This includes the updated train service specification and business case for HS2; how to remediate Phase 2a land where work has already started; and what to do with mitigation works that have been implemented along the route, e.g. HS2 keep the mitigation/land or revert it to its original state?</p> <p>DfT are awaiting ministerial advice on some discretionary funds for Phase 2a and will update when Ministers respond.</p> <p>DfT are carrying out works relating to the undertakings and assurances of Phase 2a. The Land and Property Team are going through the land disposal, selling property whilst delivering value for money, ensuring it does not disrupt the local property market. The L&amp;P Team could be invited to future meetings if there are any L&amp;P issues or updates. Work to finalise the design of Handsacre Junction is ongoing.</p> <p>SP (HS2) stated HS2's L&amp;P Team and DfT's L&amp;P team were currently working together to understand and develop a Disposal Policy and approach.</p> <p>The Chair clarified that no property was actively being put on the market currently, and that the DfT update left a lot of questions unanswered.</p>	
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Safeguarding Update</b></p> <p>PG (HS2) and the Chair reminded the Forum that the Phase 2a Safeguarding Direction had been lifted since the last meeting except for a small residual area around Handsacre to protect HS2's ability to build the Handsacre junction, which partially relies on Phase 2a powers to get HS2 trains on to the West Coast Main line.</p>	

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	<p>The line of route LAs were notified on 18<sup>th</sup> January and Forum Members were forwarded copies of the letters sent to LAs' Chief Executives.</p> <p>No questions relating to safeguarding were raised by Forum Members, save for the Chair who queried whether the Handsacre safeguarding was to be retained in its original form or amended.</p> <p>PG (HS2) advised there is no new safeguarding, no additional land safeguarded.</p>	
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>RRW – Mobilisation Strategy</b></p> <p>NH (HS2) gave an update. He advised that the scope of works is subject to ratification by DfT in time.</p> <p>The Chair asked why it was referred to as Route-wide Remediation Works (RRW) and not close-down (as per the Forum renaming).</p> <p>NH (HS2) explained it was for motivational purposes to best deliver the scope in the safest and best way and to maintain the exemplary safety record. He confirmed that the existing contractor, Balfour Beatty, would remain as the main contractor and NH and his team would be involved in that delivery.</p> <p>NH (HS2) explained HS2 will continue to operate within the undertaking's, EMRs assurances etc., to continue to operate under the lorry route provisions and under the Code of Construction Practice and operate in the Community as previously.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there were any questions, but there were none.</p>	
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Approach to retention of mitigation works</b></p> <p>SP (HS2) ran through the Schedule 15 powers and explained the rationale behind early land possessions under S15 (temporary), including compulsory purchase notices which were issued with the intent that they would be followed up with permanent acquisition once land need was fully understood. Following cancellation, the position is that some temporary land (which was intended to be permanent) will not become permanent, thus there is work to agree a disposal approach and a restoration scheme with the landowner and LPA.</p> <p>The Chair asked if it means HS2 are totally in the hands of the owners as what happens to the land. HS2 said further discussions to be held with the DfT to confirm.</p> <p>TL (HS2) provided an update and run through of the HS2 proposed maintenance/consenting approach for sites. He advised site by site assessments are required in most cases to ensure the best strategy approach is adopted and he confirmed that HS2 will continue to maintain some of these in the interim. If there is no long-term intention to maintain sites permanently for biodiversity value for HS2, the preference is to not restore sites to the original condition if it's not value for money</p>	

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	<p>for taxpayers; instead sites would be returned to landowners in their current condition. There is work to do to agree if any of the mitigation would be suitable for offsetting further impacts of the closeout of Phase 2a or the remediation.</p> <p>HS2 are currently developing the disposal strategy, to include any need to obtain consents under S17; an update on what those might be, will be provided at a future meeting after liaising with lawyers. PG (HS2) suggested a further discussion following that update in terms of providing a steer/initial view. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>The Chair asked Forum Members' account of local projects and if they had a general view on returning sites to owners without restoring to their former condition. He invited LAs to consider a general response as an action. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>PG (HS2) noted 'Stafford Borough Council' not Staffordshire County Council in the Mitigation Site Breakdown table presented. To amend prior to slides being circulated. <b>ACTION</b></p>	<p>HS2</p> <p>LA's</p> <p>HS2</p>
7.	<p><b>Consenting Approach S15 and S17</b></p> <p>PG (HS2) clarified the different agreement requirements of S15 and S17 and reiterated that, in most circumstances the HS2 preference/proposal will be to leave the ecology sites in situ.</p> <p>PG (HS2) asked if Forum Members had a general view on this generic approach.</p> <p>The Chair invited Forum Members to give their view or take as an action for LPAs to consider their response to the proposal to retain ecological sites as currently built. DC (ESBC) recognised it is a proposal for each case to be considered.</p> <p>PG (HS2) advised HS2 will update on the consenting approach for S17 at the next meeting. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>PG (HS2) advised that DfT will be updating their S17 Site Restoration Appeals Guidance (including the S15 process) in the next few months. The Forum will be kept informed of timeframes involved and it will be presented at a future meeting. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>The Chair asked if it is applicable across all phases. PG (HS2) stated it would be the same document but modified for each Phase.</p>	<p>HS2 Ltd</p> <p>DfT</p>
8.	<p><b>Feedback from LAs</b></p> <p>David Clarke (SCC) stated HS2 had a lot to take on board with a lot of issues being unpacked and it will take time. He thanked the team for the helpful meeting.</p>	
9.	<p><b>AOB</b></p>	

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	<p>Following discussion on proposed future dates, they were agreed as: 8 May, 10 July, 11 September, 20 November 2024 at 10:30am. It was further agreed the meetings would be allocated 90 minutes going forward.</p> <p>HS2 to amend dates on the slide and send placeholders. <b>ACTION</b></p> <p>There being no other business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and contributing and closed the meeting.</p>	<b>HS2 Ltd</b>
	<b>End</b>	